

# Programs for Farmland Protection

USDA - Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

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Helping People Help the Land

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# Farm Bill Programs

- ◆ Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP)
  - ◆ Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)
  - ◆ Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
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# Farm and Ranch Land Program - Basic Features

- ◆ One national funding period annually
  - ◆ Applications ranked at state level
  - ◆ Eligible entities include tribal, state, local governments and NGOs.
  - ◆ FRPP pays up to 50% of easement purchase price
  - ◆ Cooperating entity holds easement
  - ◆ Easement protects land from development
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# Farm and Ranchland Program – Eligibility and Ranking

- ◆ Contain Prime or unique soils
  - ◆ Have a pending offer
  - ◆ Privately owned
  - ◆ HEL conservation plan
  - ◆ Large enough to sustain ag production
  - ◆ Accessible to markets
  - ◆ Surrounded by land that supports ag
  - ◆ AGI limits for landowner
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# FRPP funds and enrollment in WA

Year	# of Parcels	Acres	Dollars
2002	8	1,064	1,670,000
2003	11	1,091	1,896,000
2004	11	1,038	1,809,000
2005	14	912	1,983,000
2006	7	634	1,135,000
2007	9	419	1,125,000
2008	21	339	1,890,000

# Grassland Reserve Program – Basic Features

- ◆ Landowners apply for easement, rental or restoration agreement
  - ◆ Ranking and funding at state level
  - ◆ Limits development or crop production on grazing lands
  - ◆ Easement value equals total value minus grazing value.
  - ◆ Rental value based on local prevailing rates
  - ◆ Includes funds for restoration
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# Grasslands Reserve Program – Ranking and Eligibility


- ◆ Current grazing operation
  - ◆ Risk of conversion
  - ◆ Biodiversity and native plant community
  - ◆ Habitat for important or declining species
  - ◆ Proximity to other protected lands
  - ◆ Length of easement
  - ◆ 40 acre minimum
  - ◆ AGI limits
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# GRP Acres and Enrollment in WA

Year	# of Parcels	Acres
2003	1	134
2004	3	2939
2005	1	623



# Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

- ◆ Not typically thought of for farmland protection
  - ◆ Easements and agreements restore ag lands to wetlands
  - ◆ Can be used to help ag producers remain viable by receiving financial compensation for lands with marginal productivity.
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# FRPP Changes in 08 Farm Bill

- ◆ Expands eligibility to include land “the protection of which will further state or local policy consistent with the purposes of the program.”
- ◆ Adds forest land that’s part of ag op
- ◆ Appraisals will follow “industry approved” method
- ◆ Agreements 3-5 years
- ◆ Allows for certification of entities

# FRPP Changes in 08 Farm Bill

- ◆ Certified entities can:
  - Have longer agreements, minimum 5 years
  - Submit proposals for additional funds
  
- ◆ Increases funding
  - 08       \$ 97 M
  - 09       \$121 M
  - 10       \$150 M
  - 11       \$175 M
  - 12       \$200 M

# GRP Changes with 98 Farm Bill

- ◆ Enroll and additional 1,220,000 acres during FY2009-2012
  - ◆ 10-year, 15-year, 20-year rental contract or permanent easement
  - ◆ Payment limit \$50,000 per year for rental agreement
  - ◆ Restoration agreements (for lands under easement or rental contract) payment limit \$50,000 per year
  - ◆ Easement payment in up to 10 annual payments
  - ◆ Appraisal based on lesser of market survey, cap or offer
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# Question and Answer Time

Additional information can be found on the web at:

Washington NRCS

[www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov)

National NRCS

[www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)

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